

*Season's
Greetings From
the RASA
Team*



Amateur Radio in the Movies

VK9NT Report

Essential Items for Summer Ops

Iambic Key Explained

RASA Went to QTech

ACMA news explained

More...



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19 The cover picture for this month was compiled by one of RASA's unpaid Christmas Elves. Please don't tell him.

Contributing Items For QTC Magazine

22 QTC Magazine welcomes contributions for future editions. When planning to submit an article, please read our submission guidelines first.

30 Following the guidelines will save you and the editing team a lot of time and effort. The guidelines are [HERE](#)



From the President

Paul VK2APA

As the mercury climbs and 6-meters and (hopefully) above opens up for the summer Sporadic E season, there is a distinct kind of magic that settles over the ham shack. The glow of the valves—or the backlight of the LCD—is competing with the air conditioner, and the static on 40 meters signifies an approaching thunderstorm.



It is that time of year again when we start sending "subtle" links to our better halves.

If the chatter on the local repeaters and the WIA broadcasts is anything to go by, the "Big Man" (callsign VK9SC, perhaps?) has updated his inventory. We are seeing a shift away from just the heavy iron of the desktop base stations toward the agile and the digital.

Expect to see a lot of stockings stuffed with the new generation of pocket-sized wonders. The **NanoVNAs** and **TinySAs** have become essential, affordable tools that every operator needs.

For the more adventurous, Santa seems to be promoting portable operations heavily this summer. With so many of us heading bush or to the coast for the holidays, lightweight **QRP rigs**, **battery boxes**, and **wire antennas** are popular, great for participating in the various portable activities ending with "on the Air" - Parks on the Air (POTA), Beaches on the Air (BOTA), and Silos on the Air (SiOTA), to name a few...

Don't forget

But while the new SDRs with their waterfall displays are mesmerizing, we all know that the gear is just the vessel. The real gift of Amateur Radio isn't what sits on the desk; it's who sits at the other end of the mic.

We often joke that Amateur Radio is the original social network. But unlike the curated scrolling feeds of the internet, our network is built on real-time, unscripted human connection.

For most of us, an Aussie Christmas is a loud affair—backyard cricket, too much food, and the chaos of extended family. But for many in our fraternity, the holidays can be the quietest time of the year. The "Silent Key" list grows longer every year, and illness, distance, or isolation can leave many shacks feeling particularly empty.

This is where the true spirit of our hobby shines.

The fellowship of Amateur Radio—that distinct sense of "mateship"—is a tangible force. It is the ability to throw your callsign out into the ether and have a stranger answer back as a friend. It is the morning net that checks in on the operator who hasn't keyed up in a few days. It is the willingness to slow down your CW speed for a nervous newcomer.

A Summer Mission

So, here is my editorial challenge to you this season. By all means, enjoy the new toys. Build that kit you find under the tree. String up that new dipole in the baking sun (remembering to Slip, Slop, Slap while you do it).

But also, spin the dial.

Look for the operator calling CQ into an empty band on Christmas Day. Listen for the voice that sounds a little hesitant or a little lonely. There are operators out there for whom *your* voice might be the only human contact they have on Christmas.

Take an extra five minutes. Move beyond the signal report and the weather. Ask about their setup; ask if they've had a good year. Invite them into the fellowship.

The shiny gear in the shack is wonderful, but the greatest gift Santa brings us is the ability to bridge the gap between two people—whether they are down the street or on the other side of the continent—instantly.

May your SWR be low, your batteries charged, and your logbook full.

Merry Christmas, and 73.

Paul VK2APA
RASA President



**The Radio Amateur Society
of Australia**

From Across the Ditch

You may be aware that since November 1, NZART has been running a trial on 30m. In this trial, ZL ops can use SSB on the sub-band 10.120 to 10.130, This means the dial frequency can be no more than 10.127. There is a report on the trial NZART's InfoLine #503, page 3. NZART-Infoline-503-1.pdf



NZART

New Zealand Association of
Radio Transmitters Inc.

Of particular interest to me is the difference between 10.127 and 10.130. I have started chasing VK POTA and VKFF activators and I find that when activators use SSB on 30m they often use 10.130. Although the maximum frequency of 10.127 is a recommendation only, I follow this recommendation. If other ZL chasers do the same, VK activators could possibly get more chasers if they QSYed to 10.127.

73 Philip
ZL1PSH

QTC From the Editor



Why Wasn't I Told?

In a conversation recently, and may I add I've had many similar conversations over the years, I said to someone "I didn't see you at (insert name of event here)"

The response knocked me over a bit- "Well I would have gone, but I didn't know it was on. I wish someone had told me."

I said "It was advertised on the Amateur Radio News broadcast for several weeks, and plastered all over the local Amateur Radio Facebook groups, and also promoted on local email reflectors, and in the Amateur Radio magazines. How did you **not** know?"

"Oh I don't read the magazines, I don't do Facebook, can't be bothered with the emails, and the radio broadcasts, well... I just don't have the time to listen to those." That of course is a mash-up of the responses I've heard in similar conversations.

Perhaps I'm wired differently, but my brain tells me that If I'm to engage in some activity, hobby etc, it's my sole responsibility to find out what is going on. I won't mislead you here – I sometimes miss things because I get distracted and forget, but that's not the same as failing to make the effort to find out.

It hasn't escaped me that because you're

reading this, I'm preaching to the choir, however I want to encourage the choir to make similar observations in discussion with other Amateurs, at club meetings, events and so forth.

This is because not knowing is not because you weren't told.

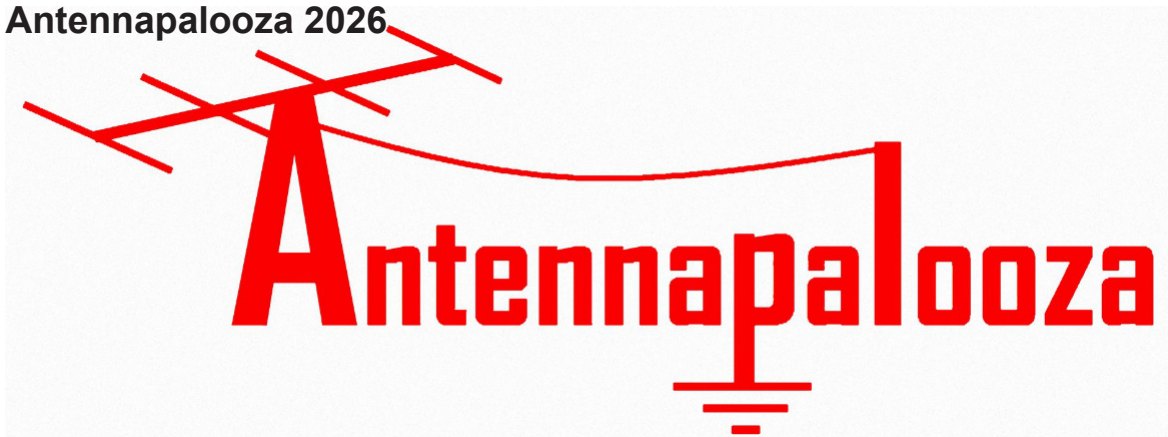
It's because you didn't listen.

In this edition of QTC, we publish the report on VK9NT, which was inexplicably left out of the November issue; we take a look at some issues from the ACMA, there's a story about Amateur Radio in movies, some handy hints about taking care of yourself when operating in the great outdoors, A report from a RASA team member who attended Qtech, our regular columns and more.

Enjoy your read of the December 2025 edition of QTC, and we wish you all the very best for the festive season.



Antennapalooza 2026



Antennapalooza in 2026 will be on Saturday/Sunday the 18th and 19th of April.

This is the tenth Antennapalooza event. As always, the weather will be mild and perfect* nobody will get stuck in mud and the air will be completely still.

As in the past, it will take place in Drouin West, Victoria, and the details are on the Antennapalooza [website](#) .

For a change of pace, the theme for 2026 will be about POWER. How power reaches our homes, how we organise power in our shacks, battery & portable power and what's new with Solar. We will have a series of speakers on related topics under the pavilion.

In 2025 around 70 visitors attended and checked out the demonstration curtain array on 20 metres. Come for an hour or come for the whole weekend with your caravan and camping gear. Attendance is free. No bookings are required.

Look out for more details when we get closer to the event.

* Actual weather may be slightly less than perfect.



Changes To Accessing The Acma Portal

The ACMA wants all amateurs to be able to login to their **ACMA Assist** portal so that they may view and update information about their Amateur qualification. When this facility was launched, it was possible to gain access with just an email address and a password, or by using the government operated digital identification method called myID.



Candidates who successfully pass an Amateur exam must access the ACMA Assist portal to receive the Recognition Certificate of their new qualification, which is a necessary step to acquire a callsign.

The ACMA then announced that from the start of October 2025, the option for new operators to gain access to this portal with email and password only has been removed. All new access requires the **myID** method to access the ACMA Assist portal.

This is problematic for many possible reasons.

Convolutd and painful is the kindest way to describe the process of obtaining the myID access. Information on the process is described here: <https://www.myid.gov.au/how-to-set-up-myid>

It requires applicants to meet all of their criteria, plus successfully download a government App on an Android or Apple device, such as a mobile phone or tablet.

- If you don't have a 'smart' device, you cannot get a myID app, and although it's possible to access services via a browser on a desktop computer, all I can say is good luck navigating that process.
- If you do get a myID, but your mobile device is damaged, or lost, or without internet access, you can't access myID mandated services. (unless you've also set up on a desktop)
- If you are under 15, the Australian government won't issue a myID to you.

The last item prevented anyone under the age of 15 who had passed their Foundation license from getting a Recognition Certificate and in turn prevented them from getting a callsign, even though there are notionally no age restrictions for Amateur operators.

On the 2nd of December 2025 the ACMA released an information bulletin **Youth access to ACMA Assist** to resolve this dilemma. In this information release they provide a link to a Manual Application process for a Recognition Certificate and callsign. You can see this [HERE](#)



If you experience difficulty determining which forms to access, you may contact the ACMA by phone on: **1300 850 115 (9am – 5pm AEST, Mon – Fri, except public holidays)**

3rd Party Operation Notes Deleted From Operating Procedures

RASA had noted that the references to Amateur Third Party operation on the ACMA Operating Procedures website had a significant error. The site indicated that third party operation by Australian Amateurs was completely prohibited unless a distress event was in progress. In reality, Third Party operation is permissible with other countries that also support this option. RASA wrote to the ACMA about this, as it could be responsible for exam candidates incorrectly answering questions on this topic.

The ACMA agreed that the procedure on the website was inconsistent with the License Condition Determination (LCD) document and that the LCD always has priority over the website wording. They indicated they would amend their website.

On December 2, 2025 the ACMA removed the misleading reference to Third Party Operation from their Operating Procedures website. While this removed the error, (which is a good step and we thank the ACMA for doing this), it also means that now there is no reference to this type of operation on their procedures page. Presently, for Amateurs and exam candidates to have an understanding of what Third Party operation really means, they must read the very large LCD document and interpret the text correctly.

This document can be found [HERE](#).

For the convenience of our readers, here is the appropriate extract from that document:

9 Conditions – purposes and transmissions

- (1) A person must not operate an amateur station otherwise than for an amateur purpose.
- (2) A person must not operate an amateur station:
 - (a) to obtain financial gain or reward, or for the purpose of obtaining financial gain or reward; or
 - (b) to solicit a message that is to be transmitted on behalf of another person unless the message relates to a disaster; or
 - (c) to transmit:
 - (i) a message that enables any person to obtain financial gain or reward; or
 - (ii) a message that is, or includes, an advertisement; or
 - (iii) a message to an amateur station in another country, if the purpose of the transmission would be inconsistent with the table of frequency band allocations in the spectrum plan or a footnote to that table; or
 - (iv) subject to subsection (3), a signal that is encoded, for the purpose of obscuring the meaning of the signal; or
 - (v) subject to subsection (4), a signal that is unintelligible.

Note: Subject to this subsection, a person may transmit messages on behalf of a third party to an amateur station, including an amateur station in a foreign country. The laws of that country may apply to the person in respect of that transmission.

In a future edition of QTC, we may expand upon the concept of what Third Party operation means and how the legislation appears to apply to Australian operators.

Norfolk Island - VK9NT 2025

14 September, 2pm local time (UTC + 11), 1,400km East of mainland Australia

We are on final approach maybe 1,000 metres above sea level, perfect flying conditions, a nice sunny day with almost no wind. As I glance out the window I see the north-western corner of the island come into view and a sense of relaxation washes over me. We are almost there.

The island's well-known cliffs fill the tiny window, and Mt Pitt stands resolute at the northern end of the island. Our QTH is on the north-east corner of the island. This will be our home for the next two weeks.



Our first view of the island



St Barnabas Church built 1880

I thought readers might be interested to read a bit about Norfolk Island, it's history, environment and day-to-day life. We don't really need another article recounting HF antennas, pileups, and QSO statistics... but of course, I'll provide some details of the more notable moments of radio operation at VK9NT.

I reference CWT a bit in this article. CWT is a series of four short one-hour mini-contests each week. It is run by CW Ops - you can read more here <https://cwops.org/cwops-tests/>

Hopefully this will also offer an insight as to why this was the 8th activation of VK9NT for Luke VK3HJ and myself. We've always had others join us, but this time it was just three of us, with

Alan VK6CQ making up the third leg of the trio.

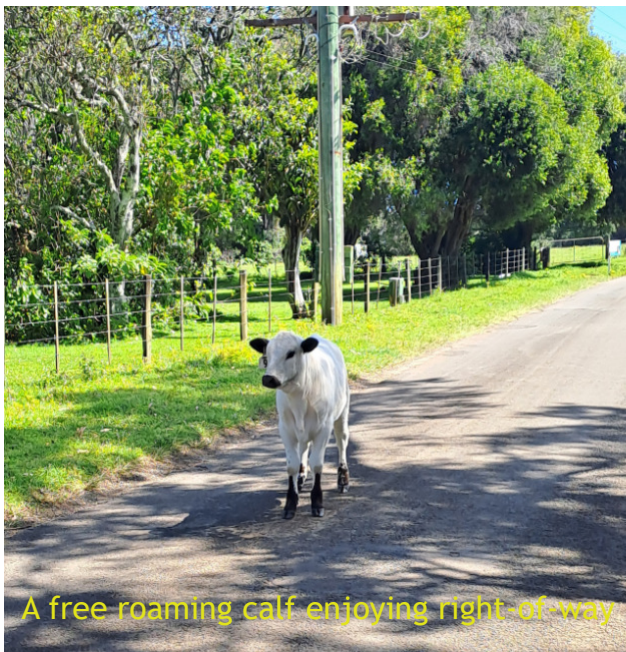
Norfolk Island

Norfolk Island is an external territory of Australia located in the Pacific Ocean 1,412km east of mainland Australia and 900km north of New Zealand, comprising a landmass of just 36 square kilometres. It was first settled by Polynesians around the 14th and 15th century before being claimed by Captain James Cook in 1774 and established as a British penal colony in 1788. Like many convict settlements it has a

dark history during the latter part of the 18th century and early part of the 19th century. The last convicts were relocated to Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land) in 1855.

In 1856 the [Pitcairn Islanders](#), descendants of the [Bounty mutineers](#), were resettled on the island by the British Government. The Pitcairn Islands had become too small for the population. On 3rd May 1856, 193 people departed Pitcairn Islands and one month later 194 people landed on Norfolk Island (a baby was born in transit).

It became an Australian external territory in 1914, developing a unique form of self-government under Australian administration. For 170 years Norfolk Islanders have lived on the island and enjoy an easy-going lifestyle and until 2015 were largely self-governed. Norfolk has two official languages: English and Norfolk, which is a blend of 1700s-era English and Tahitian. True Norfolk Islanders are descendants from the British HMS Bounty mutineers and their companions. These original Bounty mutineers and their Tahitian consorts developed a creole language that is still used today by their descendants.



A free roaming calf enjoying right-of-way

Norfolk Island is home to about 2,200 people and not a single traffic light or parking meter. Cows, chickens and roosters roam free and the speed limit is 50km/h; grazing stock has right-of-way. This includes the chickens.

14 September, 4pm local time
(UTC + 11)

QTH and equipment we got straight to work setting up the station and made a snap decision to erect the DX-Commander before it got dark.

The 80m doublet could wait for a fresh new day.

It took us about one and half hours to setup the HF station and get the vertical in place; and most of that time was unravelling and laying out twenty radials, each 15 metres long.

The first night wasn't overly busy... Luke got an early night, and I put the first 150 QSOs in the log, mostly on 30 metres.



15 September

Today the main goal was to get the 80 metre Doublet up in the air. Our usual arrangement of one end to the tree next door was not possible as people have moved in. We opted for an alternative tree on our land, not quite as high (only 20 metres), but by providing an east/west orientation for the main lobes – which should improve signals those directions.

Luke put in his usual gargantuan effort by climbing up the 20-30 metre Norfolk Island pine trees with a length of rope for the doublet. The first tree proved to be unsuitable. The second ascent was a success (and the descent worked out as well 😊).

The other end of the doublet soon had its sky-hook ready to go and it was time to raise the antenna. Whilst not quite as high as our usual configuration, we expect this antenna will work extremely well... one end at 35 metres, the other at 18 metres and the feed point at about 16 metres high. As they say, a picture tells a thousand words....

Luke VK3HJ has a good head for heights



Tests with the MJF-962D confirmed the doublet was matching well and radiating our transmissions. The evening session provided some good runs on 17 metres, a few pickings on 30 metres and then closing with a nice chat with Bill, K6SQL on 40 metres.

Bed about 1am local.

16 September

I left the receiver running on 7025kHz overnight – the static and occasional weak signals are soothing and make drifting off to sleep quite easy... but at 0700 local a very loud OH2 came booming in. Time to get up, make coffee and check 10 metres.

Alan VK6CQ arrived today as well. So, a busy day meeting Al at the airport and getting him settled in.

17 September

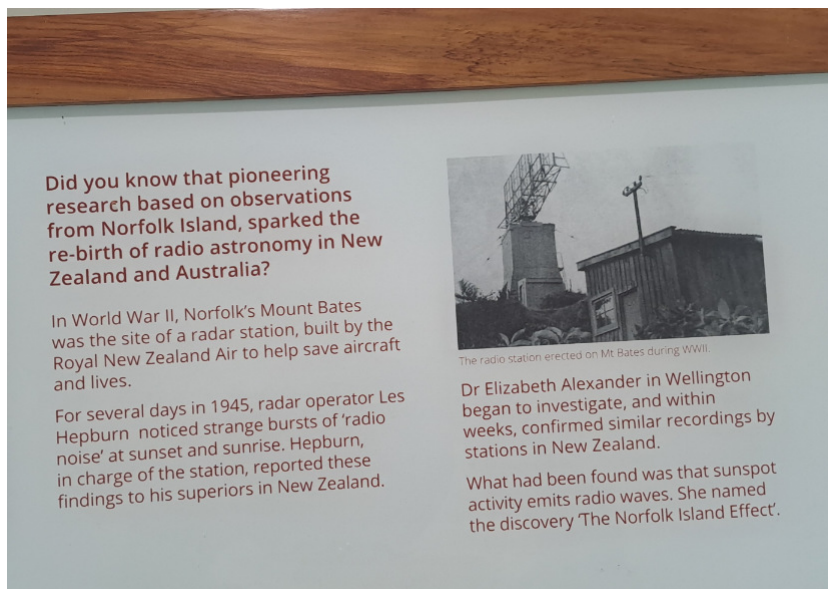
A quick visit to Kingston by the ocean with the Elecraft KH1 – I was chuffed to get fellow CW Ops members Phil VK3VB and Andy VK3OU in the log. From the other side of the world the little telescopic whip struggles a bit – next time I'll take a long wire as well.

The Botanical Gardens

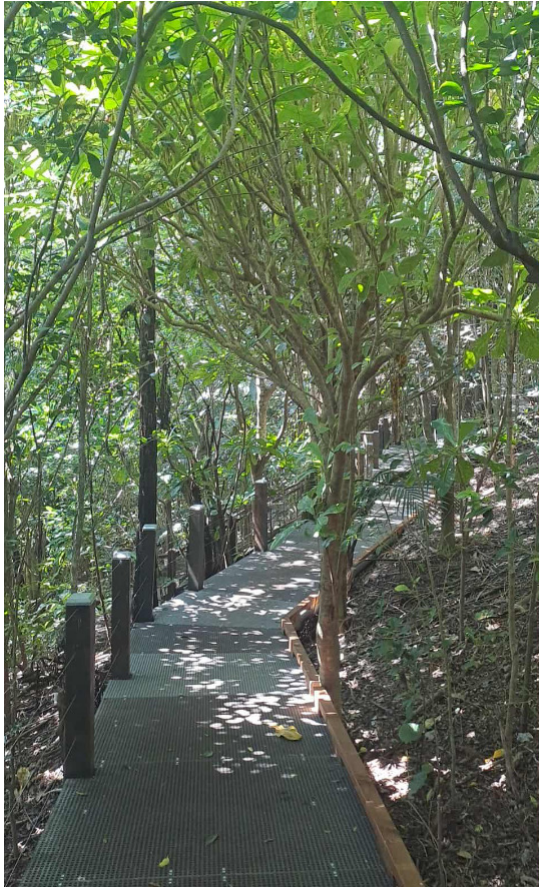
At the base of the road to Mt Pitt lies the Botanical Gardens. As well as providing an excellent series of board-walks and paths through gardens comprising native trees, plants and ferns, there is an information centre.

Fun Fact: The Norfolk Effect

Norfolk Island enjoys a temperate climate being 29 degrees south and surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. The temperature doesn't vary too much, and we enjoyed daytime temperatures in the 20-23c range and down to 15-16c overnight.



Much of the island is covered in pine forests and semi-rain-forest type flora. The national park has decent representation of Australian gum trees as well.



As you can see from the chart below, the island enjoys pleasant temperatures with minimal variation all year round.

Climate data for Norfolk Island Airport (29°03'S, 167°56'E, 112 m AMSL) (1991–2020 normals, extremes 1939–2024)													[hide]
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °C (°F)	28.5 (83.3)	28.4 (83.1)	28.4 (83.1)	27.9 (82.2)	25.1 (77.2)	23.4 (74.1)	22.0 (71.6)	21.8 (71.2)	23.8 (74.8)	24.4 (75.9)	26.5 (79.7)	28.2 (82.8)	28.5 (83.3)
Mean daily maximum °C (°F)	24.8 (76.6)	25.3 (77.5)	24.5 (76.1)	23.0 (73.4)	21.1 (70.0)	19.4 (66.9)	18.6 (65.5)	18.5 (65.3)	19.4 (66.9)	20.4 (68.7)	21.9 (71.4)	23.6 (74.5)	21.7 (71.1)
Mean daily minimum °C (°F)	19.5 (67.1)	20.2 (68.4)	19.5 (67.1)	18.0 (64.4)	16.5 (61.7)	14.9 (58.8)	14.0 (57.2)	13.5 (56.3)	14.3 (57.7)	15.2 (59.4)	16.4 (61.5)	18.2 (64.8)	16.7 (62.1)
Record low °C (°F)	12.1 (53.8)	12.8 (55.0)	12.1 (53.8)	9.7 (49.5)	6.6 (43.9)	7.1 (44.8)	6.2 (43.2)	6.7 (44.1)	7.7 (45.9)	8.2 (46.8)	8.7 (47.7)	11.4 (52.5)	6.2 (43.2)
Average precipitation mm (inches)	80.3 (3.16)	86.8 (3.42)	106.8 (4.20)	95.4 (3.76)	101.5 (4.00)	120.6 (4.75)	122.5 (4.82)	99.6 (3.92)	78.4 (3.09)	62.0 (2.44)	72.0 (2.83)	83.9 (3.30)	1,109.9 (43.70)
Average precipitation days (≥ 1.0 mm)	7.7	8.8	9.3	10.3	12.2	13.0	13.6	12.2	9.4	7.5	6.8	6.7	117.5
Average afternoon relative humidity (%)	71	72	69	69	69	69	68	67	69	67	67	70	69

18 September

I had a good run on 20 metres after the CWT at 13z (21 QSOs) and was pleased to work Stew GW0ETF and Bert F6HKA in normal operations and say hello. It was the first time working Stew I think – and from VK9NT is a bonus. Over the course of the two weeks, I reckon we logged twenty to thirty CW Ops members, and I hope a new one for CW Ops awards for many.



Chris VK3QB (seated) and Luke VK3HJ flying the CW Ops banner

21 September

The clouds gathered during the afternoon. Our run with glorious weather was coming to an end. A storm was looming. Propagation also appeared to be suffering from a geomagnetic storm or some such.... All day conditions were flaky, watery and run-rates were down. Even FT8 wasn't holding F&H mode for an extended period.

Shortly after dark the first downpour rained down upon us. Almost tropical. Alan had to make a mad dash to bring in the washing. We got 55mm of rain overnight. (that's a bit over 2 inches for those pre-metric)

Daily Life

Our DXpeditions are more like a holiday. Don't get me wrong: we certainly dedicate a lot of time and effort to being on-air and really enjoy all the QSOs. As Norfolk Island is no longer highly sought after, the pileups aren't quite so hectic, so we have time to exchange QSO civilities a lot of time, which is so much more enjoyable than punching out "599 tu up".

When propagation conditions aren't favourable we make time to socialise and partake in some sightseeing. Most days we pop into Burnt Pine, the main street where all the activity takes place and have a real cup of coffee. We usually go out for dinner once or twice on each trip and meet some local friends for drinks on a Friday afternoon.

Following are a selection of photos of some of the sites we visited during our stay.



The old convict cemetery has graves dating back to 1800



The World Heritage Listed Kingston is the location of the penal colony



Who Shrunk Chris?



A 5km hike from near our QTH to the top of Mt Bates - stunning views.

24 September

I received an email from Deepak, VU2CDP. He needed Norfolk Island on 30 and 80 metres. He proposed times that would most likely work – making it easy for us.

Luke got him in the log on 30 metres just after midnight local time (as predicted), and then we did a shift change about 1310z. After working 30m for a while I decided to QSY to 80; I dropped a brief email to Deepak confirming I'd be there at the proposed time.

QTC December 2025

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A 5Km hike from our QTH to the top of Mt Bates - stunning views

1338z. Finally heard Deepak VU2CDP [A](#) breaking through the QRN on 80m. Actually, the QRN wasn't so bad this end – about s3, peaking s5. I was able to give Deepak a solid 559 – very nice to get another CW Ops member in the VK9NT log. Two new band slots for Deepak – these are the QSOs that really matter to us.

I still marvel at the wonders of HF propagation... earlier in the afternoon of 23 September I'd been working a rather casual gathering on 15 metres, nothing hectic. One moment I was working JA and NA, then out of the blue, an XE followed by and EA and F stations.

Sometimes I have a quick thought about the national dishes (or local wx) and what the ops might be having as a meal that evening.... sushi, steak, borscht, burritos, paella or maybe pot-au-feu. I glance at the grey line map to determine if it's breakfast, lunch or dinner – or, like me, Deepak VU2CDP, a night-owl chasing a new one.

Some ten minutes later I was calling on 80m again. After all, I'd gone to the trouble of matching the antenna, and if Deepak could copy me 559, there must be other insomniacs in the night-time shadows seeking out some interesting DX. I heard a weak signal down in the noise floor... it probably took another fifteen minutes for the rise and fall of propagation and favourable breaks in the static, but finally I closed the deal with BI8EUY: another good one to get in the log.

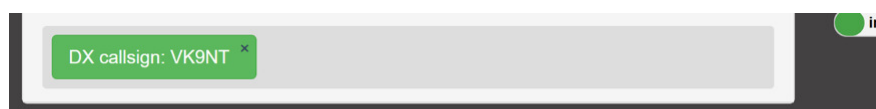
By now it was almost 3am local time.

I considered my options..... and ended up having a good run on 30 metres - check the RBN map on the next page.



callsign		spotter-callsign				vk9nt				
spotter	spotted	distance km	freq	mode	type	snr	speed	time	seen	
 DR4W	 VK9NT	16961 km	10111.9	CW	CQ	20 dB	24 wpm	1633z 23 Sep	now	
 DR4W	 VK9NT	16961 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	20 dB	25 wpm	1633z 23 Sep	now	
 VK2GEL	 VK9NT	1749 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	44 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	102 seconds ago	
 VK6ANC	 VK9NT	4956 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	28 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	103 seconds ago	
 RU9CZD	 VK9NT	13674 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	30 dB	24 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	103 seconds ago	
 KL2R	 VK9NT	11135 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	13 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	104 seconds ago	
 OK1FCJ	 VK9NT	16785 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	21 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	104 seconds ago	
 HA1VHF	 VK9NT	16829 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	20 dB	24 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	105 seconds ago	
 NT6Q	 VK9NT	10488 km	10112.1	CW	CQ	13 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	105 seconds ago	
 DF2CK	 VK9NT	16737 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	17 dB	24 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	108 seconds ago	
 ZL3X	 VK9NT	1640 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	38 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	109 seconds ago	
 VK3RASA	 VK9NT	2274 km	10111.9	CW	CQ	28 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	109 seconds ago	
 3D2AG	 VK9NT	1616 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	26 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	110 seconds ago	
 JJ2VLY	 VK9NT	7775 km	10111.9	CW	CQ	23 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	110 seconds ago	
 ZL2KS	 VK9NT	1492 km	10111.9	CW	CQ	22 dB	25 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	110 seconds ago	
 VK2RH	 VK9NT	1676 km	10112.0	CW	CQ	25 dB	24 wpm	1632z 23 Sep	111 seconds ago	

Probably everyone reading this has checked the cluster at one time or another and noted some of the colourful comments that people post... as a CW operator you aspire to have "gud ears", and go to any lengths to avoid the description "cloth ears". It's a bit of a badge of honour if you're on a DXpedition and you manage to get away with almost no criticism and maybe even the odd compliment...



well, you can imagine how pleased I was to be described as having a "GOLD EAR"!

Spotter	Freq.	DX	Time	Info	Country
SQ9IAU-@	10112.0	VK9NT	16:51 23 Sep	Up . Superb operator. Tnx	Norfolk Island
F4HZR	10112.0	VK9NT	16:24 23 Sep	UP	Norfolk Island
BI8EUY-@	3508.0	VK9NT	15:57 23 Sep	TNX GOLD EAR!	Norfolk Island
W9UUM	10111.0	VK9NT	13:29 23 Sep		Norfolk Island
K0ZX-@	10111.0	VK9NT	13:20 23 Sep		Norfolk Island
NU4N	10111.0	VK9NT	13:17 23 Sep	UP 2 EASY	Norfolk Island

That extra effort listening, calling, repeating, and finally getting BI8EUY in the log sure was fun.

And to bring us back to earth another internet correspondent labels us "poor ears". Such is the fickle nature of CW aural fame.

25th September

0700Z rolls around and I should be ready for CWT. Instead, I'm up to my armpits in a pileup on 6 metres. When it opens, it's open. Over the course of an hour I add about 70 QSOs to the log on the magic band, mostly JA, but a few HL for good measure. I'll get back to CWT when I'm home next week.

In very exciting news for us, but dull news for the islanders, it was a slow news week and we made the front page!

This story from the south Pacific wouldn't be complete without some numbers. Herewith I present our QSO statistics – and always happy to report more CW QSOs than FT8! And the final artwork for our 2025 QSL Card.

It would be remiss of me not to mention two QSOs with our editor, Dick N9EEE – the first I understand Dick was running 20W, but the second he was QRP – great to finally get Dick in the log.

If you'd like to learn more about this truly unique Pacific Island, just pop Norfolk Island in your preferred search engine and follow the links. You'll find loads of interesting information on the history and life on the Island.

73, Chris VK3QB / VK9NT

The Norfolk ISLANDER
FOUNDED 4TH AUGUST 1965
Celebrating 60 Years Serving Norfolk Island
The Best Small Island in the World.

Successors to -
The Norfolk Island Pioneer c. 1885
The Weekly News c. 1932 - The Norfolk Island Monthly News c. 1933
The N.I. Times c. 1935 - Norfolk Island Weekly c. 1943 - N.I.N.E. c. 1949 - W.I.N. c. 1951 - Norfolk News c. 1965
E: news@thenorfolkislander.com - W: www.norfolkislander.com

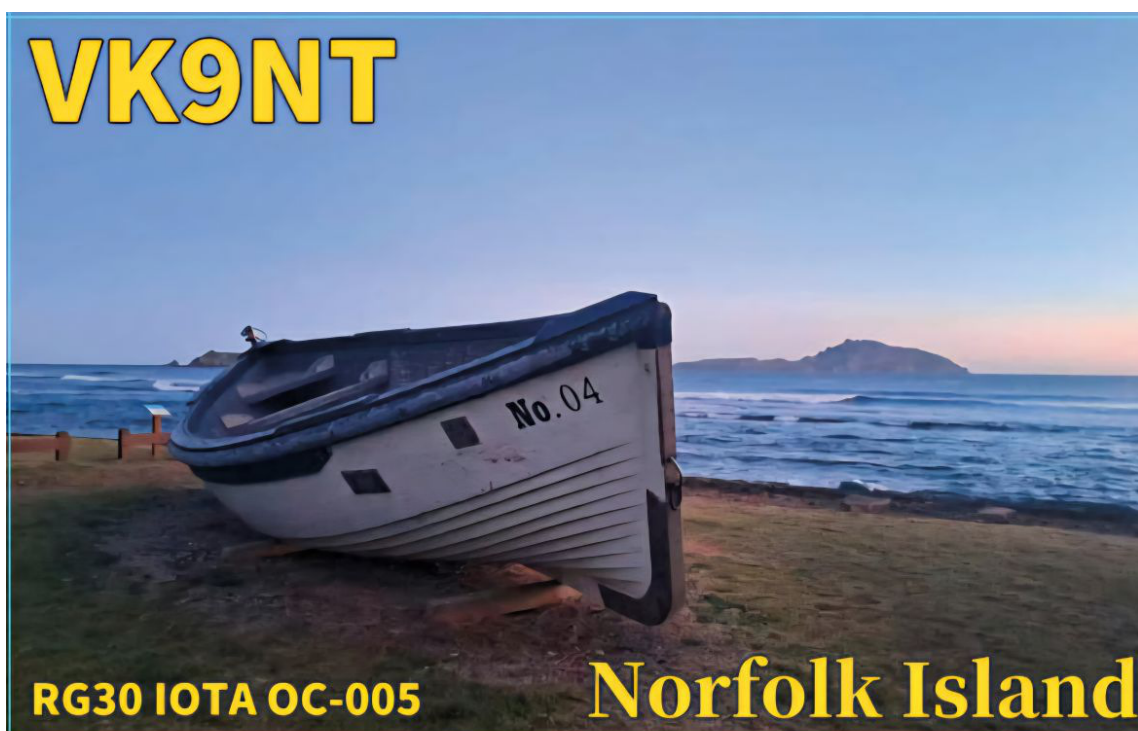
Volume 59, No. 36 SATURDAY, 20th SEPTEMBER 2025 Price \$3.50

High-resolution imaging and mapping of Norfolk Island's corals to continue
Tom Moir from the Coral Health Team at UNSW Sydney and the University of Newcastle will return to Emily and Slaughter Bay on 26 and 27 September.
Over two days, Tom will carry out high-resolution imaging and mapping of the corals using a remotely operated surface drone – a small blue boat nicknamed Sully.
It will take Tom about two days to photograph every coral in the Emily and Slaughter Bay reefs. This will be the fourth time this year that the reefs

Amateur Radio Expedition on Norfolk Island
Since 2013, Amateur Radio Operators Chris and Luke, plus a few others have been visiting Norfolk Island on an almost annual basis to make international radio contacts on shortwave radio.
Amateur Radio is a technical hobby involving electronics and radio communications and enables qualified radio amateurs to communicate with other radio amateurs all over the world.
Many Norfolk Islanders will remember the late Jim Smith and Kirsty Jenkins-Smith, and John Anderson who were long-term residents and radio amateurs on the Island.
Hosted at Pacific Palms, the expedition station VK9NT has radio equipment and temporary antennas set up for the second half of September. Operators Chris and Luke from Victoria and

FOODLAND
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MODE/BAND	80 m	60 m	40 m	30 m	20 m	17 m	15 m	12 m	10 m	6 m	2 m	TOTAL QSO	TOTAL %
CW	12	2	115	1,048	1,866	1,169	1,441	1,015	1,315	139	0	8,122	61 %
FM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.01 %
FT8	106	0	697	470	709	1,103	827	534	566	179	0	5,191	38.99 %
TOTAL QSO	118	2	812	1,518	2,575	2,272	2,268	1,549	1,881	318	1	13,314	100 %
TOTAL %	0.89 %	0.02 %	6.1 %	11.4 %	19.34 %	17.06 %	17.03 %	11.63 %	14.13 %	2.39 %	0.01 %	100 %	



Foundation Level Study Guide V3-1

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia
 



Foundation Level Study Guide
V3.1 December 2025



Your Gateway to the World of Amateur Radio

Amateur Radio provides virtually unlimited opportunities for you to explore the technical, scientific and social aspects of this truly global hobby

A Free Amateur Radio Learning Resource

This multimedia learning resource has been developed by RASA and is provided free of charge.



The Foundation Level Study Guide has undergone a couple of small fixes, and the latest version is 3-1.

The previous version was discovered to have some external hyperlinks not working, and some minor edits were made to the text about ATUs. It is not necessary to download V3-1 unless the broken links are an issue for you.

RASA's Foundation Level Study Guide was created by the RASA team to ease the cost of entry into the hobby of Amateur Radio. The FLSG can be downloaded as a PDF, or viewed in online magazine format. The FLSG is free.

The download page is [HERE](#).

Welcome to Amateur Radio Guidebook



The RASA Welcome to Amateur Radio Guidebook provides an introduction to our hobby for new Foundation class amateurs.

The book is published digitally. It contains many hotlinks to external websites with useful information.

It is available as an Acrobat pdf file suitable for reading on a PC or tablet. It can be printed if required.

The guidebook is available for download [HERE](#)

While you're on the RSA website, have a look around for the other free resources to help you along the way into Amateur Radio.

Five Essential Items for your Summer Portable Kit

Heading bush for a POTA activation or a SOTA summit this Christmas? The Australian summer is unforgiving. Before you zip up the go-bag, make sure these five essentials are part of your kit.



1. **Slip, Slop Slap** - The sun can be savage, so remember to dress appropriately, use a good sunscreen and wear a hat with a brim. Consider a camping gazebo if you can. These are cheap to buy.
2. **Serious Hydration (with Electrolytes)** Water is obvious, but water alone isn't enough when you're lugging gear up a fire trail. Add a tube of electrolyte tablets to your kit. Radio requires concentration, and the first sign of dehydration isn't thirst—it's making errors in your logbook and missing callsigns. If you're sweating, you're losing salts. Replace them to keep you sharp.
3. **The "Squid Pole"** (and spare tape) A 7m or 10m telescoping fibreglass pole (the humble Squid Pole) is the VK portable operator's best mate. It gets your Link Multiband Dipole or a Tuned Doublet, both as inverted-V style, up in seconds, regardless of the tree situation. Pro tip: Throw a roll of quality electrical tape in the bag and tape the squidpole joins; heat makes cheap tape fail, and you don't want your antenna collapsing mid-pileup.
4. **Power** - Lead-acid is dead; long live **Lithium Iron Phosphate LiFePO4**. For portable ops in the heat, LiFePO4 batteries are the undisputed king. They are a fraction of the weight (your back will thank you), but more importantly, they maintain a flat voltage curve. Your radio gets a steady 13V+ right until the battery is depleted, meaning you get full 100W output (or solid QRP punch) all day long, even when the temperature hits 35°C.
5. **Safety** - Let people know where you are going and when you expect to return.

Pack a first Aid Kit. Consider getting a **good remote First Aid Kit** and do the training. Add a **snakebite kit**. Forget the old crepe bandage from the back of the bathroom cupboard. If you are activating from a National Park, you are in the living room of our slithery friends. Pack a dedicated Snake Bite Kit containing heavy-duty pressure immobilisation bandages. Ideally, get the ones with the rectangular indicators that turn into squares when you've applied the correct tension. It's cheap insurance that weighs nothing but could save your life.

- If you plan to go to remote parts of Australia you may need to consider A **PLB** (Personal Locator Beacon). HF radio is great, but it is not a guaranteed safety net. Propagation is fickle, and if you break an ankle in a dead spot, you can't rely on 40m to save you. A registered, GPS-enabled PLB is the ultimate final-resort backup. In the vastness of the Aussie bush, a PLB takes the "search" out of "search and rescue."
- **Enjoy!**



Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

I have suggestions on how the RASA could build on the good progress it has made since its formation.

1. Raise its profile by using its callsign on air more. For example, enter a team in two international contests each year. The members of the team need not be RASA committee members. Another possibility is to take advantage of the popularity of the POTA, SOTA and VKFF award programs in Australia by permitting a designated RASA member to chase activators using the RASA callsign. The designated RASA member could be changed from month to month.
2. Except for the correction of errors, do no more editing of the FLSG for at least two years. Editing can take a lot of time, time that could be better spent on other RASA activities.
3. Shorten the length of QTC articles. This should free time for other RASA activities.
4. Where possible, avoid the use of undiplomatic language in documents. Doing so will likely increase the perceived professionalism of the RASA.

Philip Sharp, ZL1PSH

Auckland, New Zealand

We've responded to Philip, thanking him for his suggestions. Ed.



**Radio for the
Curious & Creative**
The Radio Amateur Society of Australia

Amateur Radio In Movies – How Bad Could It Be?

By Ian Jackson VK3BUF

Amateur radio is a mystery to most people. Really, they have no idea what we do. Cinema has not helped as whenever Amateur Radio is portrayed in movies they almost always get it wrong. Really, really wrong. However it's almost Christmas, so for a bit of fun let's have a brief tour in no particular order, of many Instances where the big screen has screwed up its representation of how we use Amateur radio.



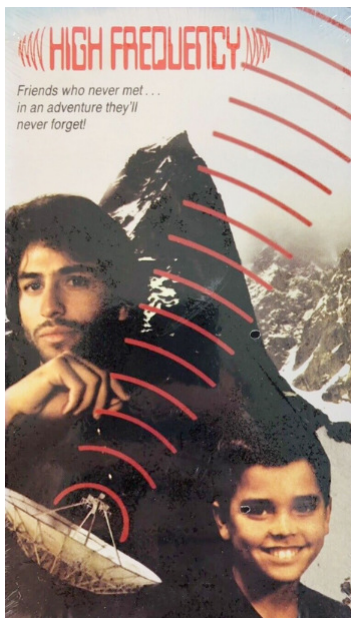
A good a place to begin as any is **Die Hard 2** where Jeremy Irons and friends take control of an airport and Bruce Willis has to sort them out. So what do you do when you need to communicate with terrorists? You pull out your **Kenwood TS940** of course, complete with modulation scope and the baddies are right there waiting for you.

Everyone knows that terrorists only use ham radio for their communications. That takes me way back to the 1992 Australian TV series called **Embassy**. Filmed in Melbourne but set in a fictitious country called Ragaan, a place that was almost, but not quite Malaysia. So much so, that the Malaysian prime minister complained to Paul Keating, who then called him 'recalcitrant' and both countries reached for their dictionaries.

I recall throwing cushions at the TV when the Australian ambassador was kidnapped and taken into the jungle. Here the baddies plugged a microphone into a classic **Yaesu FRG 7** and broadcast their ransom demands. High drama, except that the FRG7 was only a receiver and had the transmission capability of an office stapler. Did they honestly think that nobody would notice?



In a similar vein we had the 2000 movie **Frequency** the macho Dennis Quaid and Jim Caviezel as a father-son pair who establish radio contact on a **Heathkit SB301** a receiver only, via a 30 year time portal within the aurora borealis, because why not? If we are going to do that we may as well ignore that to transmit, they should have had the matching **Heathkit SB401** sitting next to it. Also these radios don't support full duplex. I don't accept that they were using VOX. You don't get to 'interrupt' the other guy who's still talking whenever you like. But whatever...



This title should not be confused with the Italian movie **Qualcuno in ascolto** from 1988, with the English title of **High Frequency**.

In this rather implausible story a fellow at a high altitude satellite relay station and a boy from the USA witness a murder through an errant video feed and have to solve the murder via HF amateur radio, because...*reasons*.

The plot had more holes than Blackburn Lancashire. Apparently there's nothing at all wrong with small boys running away from home to meet middle aged men that they met on a radio. Somehow, through this stinker, the public was supposed to reach a higher understanding about our hobby.

From Italy let's move to the 1996 blockbuster **Independence Day** where Will Smith figures out how to smite the aliens and spread the word on HF radio using Morse code. Naturally the aliens who hacked our satellites have no way of intercepting unencrypted CW. To add insult to injury they show a table full of Morse keys set with gaps wider than the space between a train and its platform, while operators pound away at them with the finesse usually reserved for a Wack-A-Mole machine.



But wait, there's more... In 2016 the aliens returned in force and landed a giant spaceship over the Atlantic Ocean and started drilling into our planetary core.

This was **Independence Day – Resurgence** (sometimes called *Independence Day - regurgence*) which earned a staggering 5.2 score out of 10 on IMDB. It was up to Jeff Goldblum and Bill Pullman to save us from the aliens for a second time, because Will Smith wasn't interested in coming back. When a trawler became trapped under the invading spaceship and the crew had to urgently communicate with Area 51, they

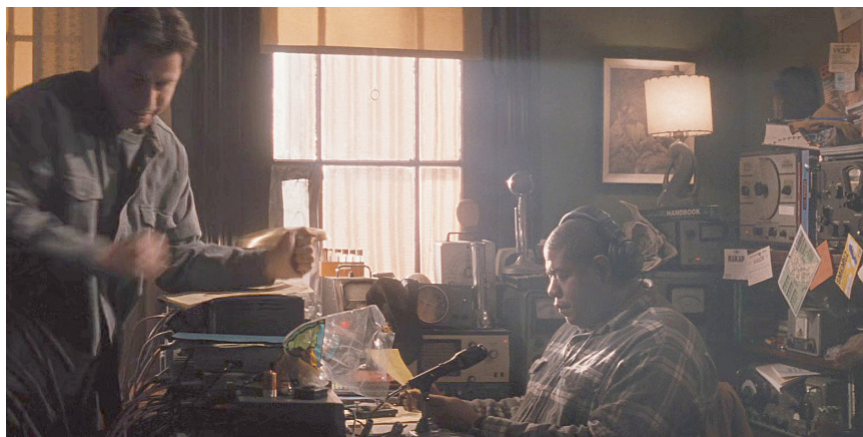


did the only thing possible and plonked a classic 1976 **Yaesu FT101E** on the table. In movies, who needs to warm filaments? Not once did I see anyone peak the Preselect and dip the anode current on the PA. Certainly it doesn't help if one person is turning the VFO while the other is talking. No wonder the aliens were winning.

If we are going to discuss Amateur Radio and aliens, we can't go past the 1986 sitcom **Alf**. This puppet cat-eating alien was an avid Amateur Radio operator, who at least treated his gear with a little respect, even though Melmac, his home planet had exploded when everyone turned on their hair dryers at the same time. He co-starred with Max Wright as 'Willie Tanner' whose popularity waned when it was reported that he was a cocaine addict with a penchant for gay homeless prostitutes. Apparently, in 1986 this behaviour was frowned upon. In 2025 actors are happy to add such activities to their CV.



With this Amateur radio movie theme, we can't ignore the efforts of Forrest Whittaker and John Travolta in the 1996 film **Phenomenon**. In this movie Forrest was a Ham and Travolta developed high intelligence and psychokinetic powers because of... *reasons*. The gear looked pretty good in Forrest's shack and the room was well decorated with junk and QSL cards. At least these two lead actors played more credible roles here than they did as Psychlo aliens in the movie *Battlefield Earth*.)



Another movie that did provide a little respect to the sector was Carl Sagan's 1997 **Contact**. We saw a young version of Jodie Foster, played by Jena Malone, calling CQ using her father's **Colins KWM 2A**. Some of the technology described in the original book was dumbed down for the movie. In the book the alien transmission from Vega which showed Hitler opening the 1936 Olympics had an underlying data transmission that was encoded by rapid switching of clockwise circular and anti-clockwise circular polarisation. A neat trick that never got a mention in the movie. As an aside, Jena Malone had a scene with an 'impossible mirror shot', which had viewers scratching their heads over how it was done. Check it out on [YouTube](#).



In the 2001 **Jurassic Park 3** one of the doomed heros called for help using a dim and filthy looking **Kenwood TS940**. (Probably left over from Die Hard 2.) I'm thinking that if someone were to put out a call on 40M saying "*Lil help here please, I'm being pursued by angry dinosaurs!*" Most stations will probably wind their power back to 3 watts and say "Sorry OM, you are fading...73's". Not only were these movies bad with their technology, they also upset palaeontologists as the beasts featured were all from the Cretaceous era and so the movie should have been called *Triassic Park* instead. Sam Neil is always good, but they lost me in the first movie when they miss-cast Samuel L Jackson as a white-shirt computer nerd. I mean...really? He's always the loud guy who thinks that 'mother' is only half of a word.



Movies get communications wrong in too many ways to be listed here. I hate it if a movie has CW in it and they grossly over-state the amount of information contained in a brief message. I mean we hear three dits and a dah through a speaker and those listening are saying "*OMG little jimmy is trapped down a well 12.5 kilometres from here and he's forgotten to put out the rubbish bins tonight.*" Even worse is where they just bang some wires together or clang a tool on a wall and it isn't even real Morse. Another pet hate is when operators turn a VFO and we hear weird BFO squeals, but when the distant person speaks, its FM quality without a noise floor.

A serious attempt at showcasing Amateur Radio on TV is within Tim Allen's TV series *Last Man Standing*, 2011-2021. You may remember Tim Allen from such movies as *Galaxy Quest*, *Santa Clause*, the voice of Buzz Lightyear in *Toy Story* and of course his series *Home Improvement*. In *Last Man Standing* he had the callsign of KA0XTT, with the 'TT' as a tribute to 'Tool Time' in his earlier series. In the real world



Tim Allen has the amateur license KK6OTD, so he is certainly relaxed behind the microphone. Check out [this clip](#) where he pokes a bit of fun at the American FCC. The radios are modern and real.

Amateur Radio in Animation

Occasionally we see evidence of Amateur radio in Animation, even if it is not very flattering. In the Simpsons we saw Principle Skinner talking on his Ham Radio to Lenny and Carl who are operating from Moe's Tavern for some reason. Skinner's mother is upset with her son, grasps the microphone and broadcasts "You're all Losers!" This is not the public interaction we are looking for. See it [HERE](#).



In Family Guy we see a scene where Peter Griffin has been enchanted by his ham radio, but is dismayed at the strange accents, while his wife just wants him to bathe more often.

Another classic Family Guy worthy of looking at is a two-way radio scene which shows an on-air discussion between Stewie Griffin and Brian the dog, where Stewie insists they should still say the word 'Over' even if the sentence ends in the word 'Over'. Watch it [HERE](#).



I'll finish up here with a scene spotted in a 2016 subtitled Japanese anime movie called **Your Name** where they visit a school activity room where a well rendered **Kenwood TS520** and external VFO appear in the background. This animation made over 10 billion Yen at the Japanese box office. The irony here is that the Japanese pay more attention to detail in their animated movies than Americans do in their live action releases.

In this story there is some mysterious mind/body swapping going on between a school girl and school boy, from different cities, in time lines 3 years apart. As is often the case with contemporary Japanese animation, many of the locations drawn are places that may be visited in real life around Japan. In 2023 I had a coffee in the same Shibuya Starbucks that featured in this animation.



Undoubtedly there are movies featuring Amateur radio that were missed here. The pattern is that where the hobby is represented at all, it is usually done badly. Books usually fare better and are more accurately researched. The original written Modesty Blaise novels often featured the lead characters using Amateur radio to great effect, even if these stories are now quite dated.

In recent years I have written some fictional works that have referenced Amateur radio and I have tried hard to present the hobby accurately. Unfortunately Hollywood has always struggled with communications authenticity and we are doomed to be throwing cushions at our TV screens for a while yet.

I'm still waiting for a blockbuster to come out where the Amateur Radio aspect is correctly portrayed, complete with DX dog piles, FT8 and old guys talking about their medical conditions.

Maybe I'll be waiting for a long time.

As we go to press - our affiliate movie studio is working on the next release. Ed.



Dits n Dahs

By Chris VK3QB

I thought I'd stray from the normal stuff and talk about something different; something important. A lot of us are ageing and some have suffered from cognitive health issues or strokes. These are serious health concerns and thankfully we have a great health system in Australia.

But how does this relate to morse code?

Morse Code, ageing, and cognitive health/recovery

Many of us (well, most of us) will hopefully have the privilege of growing old. However, as we can all attest, as we age things begin to ache. Getting out of a chair is sometimes accompanied by a groan, and, if we're honest, our mental capacity and cognitive health begin to decline as well.

But just like taking care of our bodies with exercise and a good diet, we can do things to maintain good brain health. This also applies to recovering from brain trauma, such as a stroke.



A friend of mine (and my mathematics teacher at high school) is also an amateur. Steve, VK3CAX wrote to me recently with the news that he was recovering from two strokes last year. He asked me to share this story with other amateurs as a bit of a "good news story".

"I think I told you I had 2 strokes last year while I was in Germany. Lost use of my right hand and the ability to walk. After intense physio etc, I'm virtually back to normal. However, one thing I learned was that to recover lost abilities, I needed to practice the skill intensely until it returned. I was advised that I had about 6 months to do this. Of course, you don't always know what you've lost. I got back to Melbourne about 2 months after the strokes, able to walk and write again. Then I discovered I couldn't send CW! After about 10 days and 30 mins practice per day, it was back. Your discussion of muscle memory resonated with me.

In an ageing amateur population, my experience of losing my morse must be happening quite frequently. My advice is to immediately get on the key and start re-learning not the intellectual component, but the muscular one!" Maybe you could pass on this advice via QTC".

In a related story, Terry Jackson, WB0JRH revealed in an interview with Bruce Pea on the podcast, Dit Dit FM, that he was suffering from dementia. Terry was quite candid about his condition and relayed the story that his daily morse code practice was almost certainly delaying some of the symptoms and progression of his disease. Discussions with a neuropsychologist confirm that activities like morse code can aid in building and retaining mental acuity.

I wrote to Terry asking him for an update and received the following:

"Thanks for your email and wonderful info on muscle memory. I believe sending and copying CW has slowed down my memory impairment. The major impact for me is very short memory loss. I can copy words at 40 WPM, although I usually forget the first word by the time another passes. I am working on improving this. I am optimistic that this will get better. The real upside is that working with CW has improved my expected memory loss."

It's great to read both these stories and have confidence that even if we think we are too old, or simply not able to learn the code, there is still hope. Morse code can even help us recover from cognitive decline and damage created by strokes - or indeed, as another amateur informed me, mini-strokes. Regular practice coupled with a proven technique will greatly enhance your chances of success.

And of course, it's great to hear two positive experiences from Steve and Terry and I really appreciate their willingness to share their personal stories.

CW Ops

CW Academy is a great learning environment, and CW Ops runs these classes three times per year. If you're at all interested, the next intake is in January 2026. There is still time to register your interest in classes here in VK and ZL at VK/ZL

friendly times. If you are at all interested in a class in January/February 2026, please click on the link to [complete the survey](#).



The Beginners Class is full, but there are still places in the Intermediate Class. Courses are eight weeks long and no matter your level, you'll come out the other side with better skills and more enjoyment from the code. CW Academy is immersive, engaging and fun.

Learn more about CW Academy [HERE](#)

There will be a Beginners Class – commencing 5th January and running for 8 weeks, as well as an Intermediate Class commencing on the 6th January. Email me if you'd like more information.

Even if you'd just like some hints and tips or advice on how to get started or strengthen your morse code skills, send me an email.

As always, if you have any questions or feedback, please drop me an email.

73, Chris VK3QB CW Ops
OC Ambassador

The Iambic Paddle

By Bob VK6POP

I decided to get serious about learning Morse Code. It should be easy enough, because I already have the equipment needed - a good quality telegraph key, Himound brand, and a radio that understands what it should do when said key is plugged into it. What else could I possibly need?



My balloon was floating high - I'm good to go. But my instructor - it's always the instructor isn't it - asked me if I had a paddle key, otherwise known as iambic. Straight away my tired old brain recalled something that I had heard at school way back in another century about iambic. I'm pretty sure it had something to do with poetry, which as a teenage boy, I could not see the point of.

My favourite app is Google Hindsight. Have you heard of it? It's very good. You simply ask a question, learn the answer, and say "I knew that". So I asked Google Hindsight first about iambic, then about iambic telegraph keys.



Google Hindsight reminded me that an iambic word is a word that has two syllables, the first of which is unstressed and the second of which is stressed. Examples include words like implore, uproot, and explain. It's a di-dah rhythm. I thought to myself "I can see where this might be going". I'm going to recall something very interesting at this rate.

Returning to Google Hindsight, I asked about the iambic telegraph key. I was reminded that an iambic telegraph key, also known as a squeeze key, is a type of Morse code key with two independent paddles: one for dits and one for dahs. When a paddle is pressed, its corresponding dit or dah is sent.

The name "squeeze key" is because both levers can be pressed at the same time, in which case the electronics then produces a string of "dit-dah-dit-dah-..." (iambic rhythm, hence "iambic key"), or "dah-dit-dah-dit-..." (trochaic rhythm), depending on which side makes contact first. This design allows for more efficient sending, especially for letters that require multiple dits and dahs, as it requires fewer hand movements, and probably a special brain.

Having been reminded of why an iambic key is so named, I followed the advice of my instructor and purchased myself an iambic telegraph key, and it's plugged in, waiting. Waiting for my tender touch.



Club Support

QTC will run your club's activity advertisements

Most clubs have successful internal promotion mechanisms to inform members what's coming up. But how about activities such as hamfests, when the success of the event relies on attracting people from outside of the club membership? You need to cast your net wider. You must actually ring the bell and shout it to your audience.

There are many options – email lists, social media posts, Amateur Radio news broadcasts, and magazines. QTC can help you out. We will publish your activity promo free. Make your ad either full or half page, with whatever graphics you want, and send it as a PDF to info@vkradioamateurs.org. A full page is 160mm wide, 242 high. Half page is 160x121.



The "Welcome to Amateur Radio" brochure.

Samples have been sent to all clubs – you can order more for your club, free, from RASA, including a label containing your club's contact info.

Promote Courses and Exams/Assessments in FLSG

If your club conducts courses and assessments, RASA will place your club's contact details on the back page of the popular Foundation Level Study Guide. Send details to

info@vkradioamateurs.org. We'll publish Club name, location, website, contact details.

West and North Kangaroo Electronics & Radio Club
 City of Kangaroo and surrounds ACT
 Foundation, Standard and Advanced Courses and Exams
www.yourclub.org.au secretary@yourclub.org.au

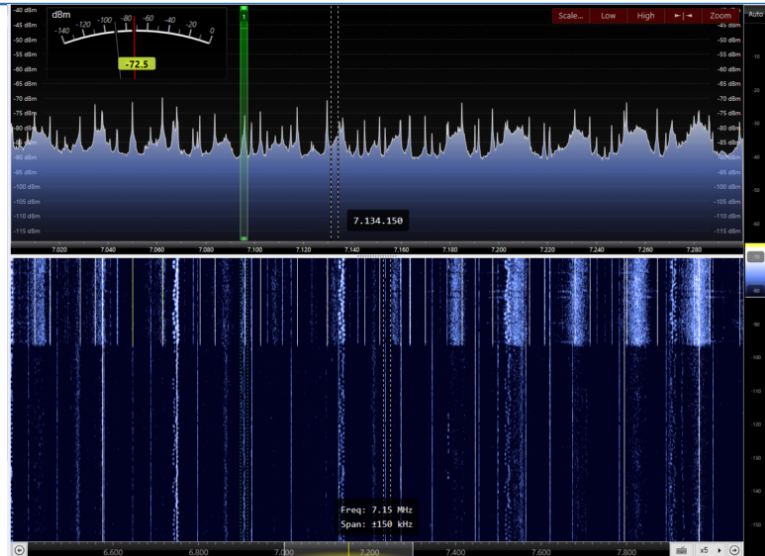
RASA will visit your club

- We can make a presentation to your club via ZOOM. Some club visits in person may be possible, however Australia is a BIG place.

- We endeavour to have a presence at hamfests. We haven't done too bad so far. Make a point of inviting RASA to your next event. If possible, we will.

QRM Guru

Does HF look like this at your QTH?



*Are you suffering QRM/EMI?

Do you need online assistance to resolve your noise issues?

What should you expect from the Regulator?

QRM Guru is a RASA online FREE resource to help you resolve your QRM/EMI issues. Visit <https://qrm.guru>

QRM.guru

Resolving interference for Amateur Radio



Contests

As the calendar year draws to a close, we haven't run out of contests yet. Some coming up are:

6-7 December International FT Challenge

The FT Challenge allows contesters and non-contesters to work each other seamlessly. Non-contesters need not be aware that they are providing "contest" QSOs and their QSO needs are completely met. The QSO exchange and messages are identical for both groups. See [Website](#) for further detail and the rules.

13-14 December ARRL 10m Contest

Objective: For Amateurs worldwide to exchange QSO information with as many stations as possible on the 10 meter band. See [Website](#) for more information.

21 December OK DX RTTY 00:00 to 24:00 UTC

Rules on the [Website](#)

3-4 January ARRL RTTY

Contest Objective: Amateurs worldwide contact and exchange QSO information with other amateurs using only the Radioteletype (RTTY) mode on the 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meter bands. More information and rules on the [Website](#).

23-24 January CQWW 160m CW

Rules and more info on the [Website](#).

25-26 January Australia Day Contest

This contest is to encourage Amateur Radio promotional Activity around the world and is designed to encourage friendly participation and help improve the operating skills of participants. It is held on the Australia Day Public Holiday that being the 26th of January. See the [Website](#) for more information.

Contest Calendar

Alan VK4SN maintains a contest calendar for Australian Amateurs. The calendar is located [HERE](#).

The Revised John Moyle Memorial Field Day

In a recent announcement, the new contest managers for the JMMFD, Diane VK4DI and Alan VK4SN, introduced significant rule changes to the contest. By significant, we refer to the introduction of multipliers to the contest.

This could be a welcome game changer for those not located on the East Coast of Australia, particularly from the South Eastern part of Queensland through to Tasmania.

The introduction of multipliers based on callsign prefixes ought to open up the contest, making it necessary for anyone looking to build a competitive score to work as many prefixes as possible in each three hour block. Maybe I missed some, however that gives a possible sixteen mults if one could catch them all in one block -

let's count on our fingers - VK0 to 9, that's 10. ZL1-5 makes 15, and P2. 16. Add to that any international stations that you work in each three hour block.

Whatever the maximum number of multipliers, it will certainly open up the contest for those living outside of the Eastern side of the continent, and perhaps make us listen just that bit harder for P2, ZL and VK8 stations.

Well done the contest managers, and now its up to us, the rest of the Australian Amateur World, to honour the work done by contest managers, by turning up and participating, especially as a portable station, which is the point of the whole exercise. How about a WICEN station in each VK call area?

Are you realtively new to Amateur Radio? The Aussie contests are a good way to improve your station and your on air skills.

The John Moyle Memorial Field Day is in March, so you have plenty of time to get your act together. Your first move is to DECIDE to participate, then work out how to work portable, however you can work from home if portable is not an option. But portable is a lot of fun.

The rules for the John Moyle Memorial Field Day are [HERE](#)

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**The Radio Amateur Society
of Australia**



QTech 2025

By Andy Beales VK4KCS

On the first weekend in November, the Brisbane VHF Group hosted Qtech 2025, a one and a half day Amateur Radio Conference at the Kedron-Wavell RSL, with the theme:



Attention/Retention- The future of amateur radio is in your hands.

The well attended Conference covered some of the 'usual' aspects of amateur radio as well as some of the lesser known but equally interesting facets of the hobby, other aspects of the hobby that don't immediately come to mind.

The full program started with the Conference Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Agenda Overview by Dr. Kevin Johnson VK4UH

The morning session started with **YOTA -Young Hams; Yes we do exist!** presented by two very well informed and eloquent young gentlemen: Otto Pattemore VK4OTZ and Finn Barry-Smith VK4II.



Otto and Finn did what most of the audience of the '1978 Sunspot maximum' era, could not even imagine, and that is give us veterans of the hobby an up-to-date view of the world and society as it is now, and how amateur Radio can fit into that world.

There is considerable interest amongst the youth of today in things technical, including Amateur Radio if the subject is brought up, very often as an adjunct to other interests that may attract a young person to become curious about AR once they are made aware of it.

YOTA was the talk that went to the heart of the Conference. For example, Finn was initially interested in Rocketry at the club that existed at his school, but soon became much more interested in the radio control and telemetry side of the project. This awareness opened the door to his search and discovery of Amateur radio and obtaining his callsign.

I introduced myself to Otto and Finn and told them that there would be an item on Qtech in the December QTC. Both were surprised to learn of the extent of information available on the RASA website and were keen to look there at the first opportunity after I mentioned that all of the resources there can be accessed free of charge.

Second on the agenda was a **WIA Update** by Scott Williams VK3KJ*. Some of the items currently under consideration by the WIA are: an eCallbook, Band plan Review and a Class licence review.

After the morning tea break a **Panel Discussion - Open Forum** with the theme:

"It's the future of AR – How do we attract new members to our community?"

The Panel- Otto Pattemore VK4OTZ, John Saunders VK4BZ and Scott Watson VK4CZ. Moderated by Dr. Kevin Johnson VK4UH, this was a very active discussion



until Lunch, with many, many points of view presented and many ideas to be followed up.

After lunch, the first presentation was **POTA - Parks On The Air** presented by Marty Nelson VK4KC.

Next, **Changes to the VHF/UHF/Microwave band plans** by Grant Willis VK5GR*

Then **Optical Communication - Non-Line of Sight DX Propagation at 730nm.** Rex Moncur VK7MO shone a light into that corner and fascinated us all with how that works. (via cloud scatter, but very particular clouds).

Following afternoon tea was **241GHz - The Final Frontier** - David Minchin VK5KK. Fractions of a millimetre matter there.

Then **Amateur Deep Space Reception.**

Who would have thought that an Amateur Radio operator could assemble a receiving station to listen now to Voyager 1, even if the news is 19 hours old when it gets here? Trevor Benton VK4AFL can.

To close the Conference for the day:

The future of VHF and Microwave Beacons / PI4 mode / and the European 6M beacon project were the subjects of a presentation by Bo Hansen OZ2M*

ARISS On Saturday evening, a group of teachers and students from Wavell State High School were present to contact the International Space Station. Numerous students spoke to the Astronauts and, despite the threatening storm that evening, the whole event was trouble free, much to the relief of all present.

Sunday's first presentation was:

Amateur Microwave in Australia by Andrew McColm VK3FS*

Lightning Scatter was the next presentation, by Rex Moncur VK7MO

Then: **Expanding the ICOM-905** by Graeme Battistuzzi VK2QJ

10GHz EME- My Journey so far by Richard Howlett VK7ZBX



The Conference closed at about 12.30 with many discussions among the attendees about the broad spectrum of topics presented and how well all the speakers had prepared their talks and subsequent Q and A that invariably followed.

Two Trade Stands were present.

ICOM Australia with a display of Transceivers including details of the IC 7300 MkII, and to answer questions.

Sean Brennan from Elite Communications, ably assisted by his daughter Charlize, had a generous display of both ICOM and YAESU radios and accessories including a wide range of antennae and just about every ancillary item an active radio amateur could need or want.

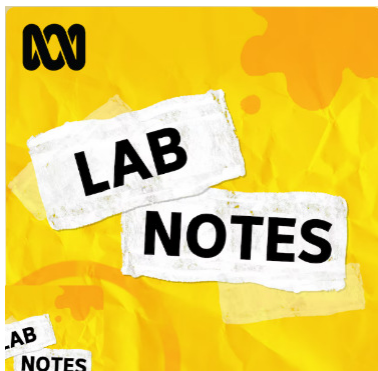
There is a similar event planned for early November 2026 in Tasmania by REAST and the next QTech is proposed to take place in 2027.

Please note- Presenters with an * after their callsign were presenting remotely.

Article by Andy Beales VK4KCS and Photo by Alan Wills VK4NA

Lab Notes:

Why aurora season isn't over yet



ABC recently published an interesting interview with Brett Carter, space weather researcher at RMIT University. Whilst the focus is on the aurora, the relevance to space weather and its impact on propagation makes this an interesting news item if you're at all interested.

Why aurora season isn't over yet - [ABC listen](#)

To join or support RASA, click on the image to visit the RASA website.

All of the RASA resources are provided free to anyone. You don't have to be a member of RASA, in fact you don't have to be a member of anything to access RASA resources.



DX Happenings



DX World weekly bulletins [HERE](#)

AU7RS Lakshadweep Islands (10-22 January 2026)-update

We are delighted to announce that the VU7 expedition has been assigned the callsign AU7RS by the Wireless Planning and Coordination Wing (WPC), Ministry of Communications, Government of India. This marks a significant milestone in the history of amateur radio in India, as it is the first time a VU7 callsign has been issued with the AU series.

The VU7 expedition, a multinational project, aims to activate the Lakshadweep Islands, a remote archipelago located off the coast of Kerala, India. The team, comprising experienced amateur radio operators from around the world, will operate from the islands, making contacts with fellow hams globally and promoting the spirit of amateur radio.



More on the [Website](#)

Here are a couple of “small fry” Dxpeditions that should be within earshot of VK:

T88AC Palau operated by Koh JA1ADT

Koh writes “I planned to QRV from Palau Is. between Dec 10 and Dec 17, 2025. I will participate in ARRL 10m Contest, and focus on low bands before and after the contest.”

Details on QRZ

HL, SOUTH KOREA

Kevin, AI5SM will be active as HL1/call from December 15 until January 1, 2026. QRV mostly portable with POTA using CW, SSB and FT8.

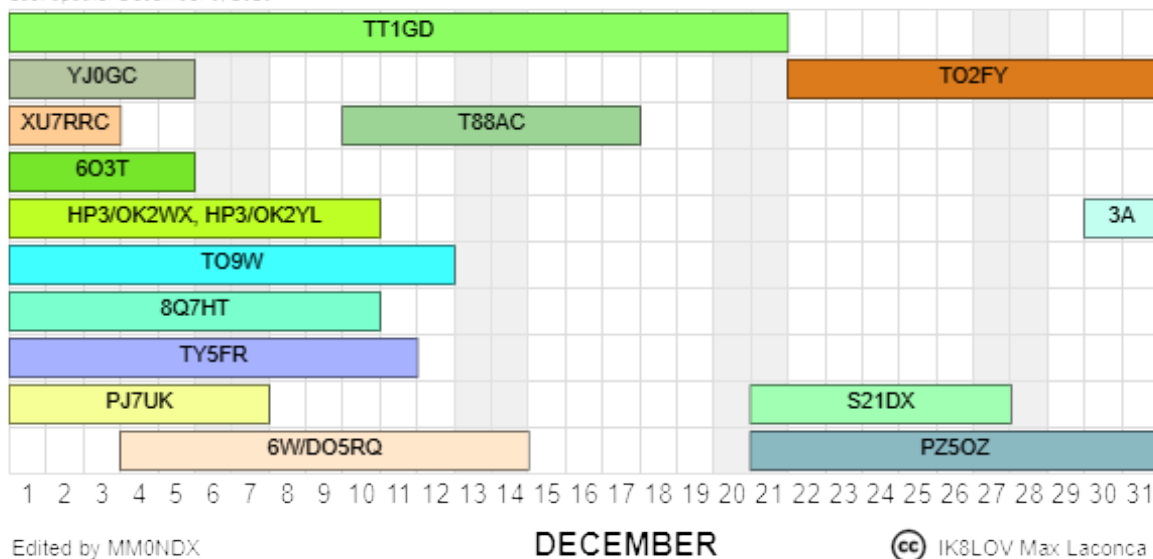
Watch for details on QRZ AI5SM page.



Image from AI5SM QRZ Page

DX WORLD_{net} FEATURED DXPEDITIONS TIMELINE

Last update: December 3, 2025



The DXPedition Timelines are published monthly by DX World. Click on the image to visit the site.

The Mike Beall Memorial HamCampton 2026

15-17 May 2026.

At Mayanup, near Boyup Brook, W.A.

HamCampton is a bring-and-show weekend of Amateur Radio.



- Set up and work your portable station.
- Look at what others have set up
- Yarn around the campfire
- You'll need to bring your own camping equipment, camping, camper, Winnebago, whatever. Unpowered sites only. There is a camp kitchen. Camp fees apply.
- Self Catering. There are takeaways in Boyup Brook.

Watch for announcements in the VK6 socials, and on the Southern Electronics Group website, <https://hamradio.org.au/>